

26. Original

West Point 14 Apr 1853

My dear Sir

I have recd your letter in reference to the Standing of your son in Mathematics, & have held a conversation with his Profr on the subject.

I do not think as far as I can judge, that his failure at the June examination, can be certainly calculated on; though his position is such as to render his success doubtful. He is now on __?__, & every thing depends upon the knowledge he exhibits in his Course between this ^ that time. I have had an interview with him this mornng, & endeavored to encourage & cheer him in his progress, & have said all I could to stimulate him to greater exertion. I told him I would write to you that he was in good heart, & would set manfully to work to do his best. If he does that & fails there will be no discredit.

I think therefore it is not necessary for you to detremine as yet, to take him away. But that it is better to wait 3 or 4 weeks longer, when the result can be more clearly anticipated. He will not take a high standing, but I hope will attain a sufficient knowledge of his Course to be advanced to the next class.

He perhaps may not have an appetite for (page 2) the exact sciences & seems to acquire general knowledge with some facility. His Profr thinks he studies, though does not think he pursues the best course to learn, & endeavors rather to impress the subject in his memory, than to comprehend the principle. He has endeavored from the beginning to correct this, but finds it difficult,

There is no means of giving him instruction than that he officially receives, & indeed if there was, he would have no time to take adavantage of it. His whole time ought to be devoted to his regular studies & duties.

I wish I could have given you more satisfactory information, but have endeavored to give you a correct view of the Case, which I know to be of deep interest to you, & in which you must allow me to have a share.

I remain yours most truly

R E Lee